

Comment on Grade Six World History
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Grade Six – World History and Geography: Ancient Civilizations

Global Overview: Early Beginnings to 300 CE

- How did the environment influence human migration, ancient ways of life, and the development of societies?
- What were the early human ways of life and how did they change over time? (hunting and gathering, agriculture, civilizations, urban societies, states, and empires)
- How did the major religious and philosophical systems (Judaism, Greek thought, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism) support individuals, rulers, and societies?
- How did societies interact with each other? How did connections between societies increase over time?

Students in sixth-grade world history and geography classrooms learn about the lives of the earliest humans, the development of tools, the foraging way of life, agriculture, and the emergence of civilizations in Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Indus River valley, China, Mesoamerica, and the Mediterranean basin. Although teachers should keep the focus on ancient events and problems, this course gives students the opportunity to grapple with geography, environmental issues, political systems, and civic engagement with fundamental ideas about citizenship, freedom, morality, and law, which also exist in the modern world.

Commented [RD1]: I don't see how these questions could prompt concrete discussion and investigation in grade 6 classrooms. They are all highly generalized, they have too many parts, they lack clarity of meaning, and they offer students no solid points of departure for actual classroom thought and activity. What they mainly do is simply restate the large topics in the course descriptions in sprawling, indeterminate form.

Here are recommended revisions that might work better:

- What factors in the earth's environment and in the technologies that humans possessed allow our species to successfully colonize all of the world's major land masses, something none of our hominin ancestors accomplished?
- How did the types of societies that developed in the world between Paleolithic times and 2000 BCE—foraging and hunting, early farming, and complex urban—fundamentally differ from one another in terms of settlement, social organization, occupations, and relations between men and women?
- What historical factors might have encouraged the rise of large-scale religious and philosophical systems starting in the first millennium BCE, when until then people's belief systems were small-scale and local?
- Why did people in different parts of Afroeurasia or the Americas want to trade with one another over long distances? What sort of technology and organization contributed to the development of commercial exchange?

Students practice history as an interpretative discipline. They read written primary sources, investigate visual primary sources, and learn how to analyze multiple points of view, cite evidence from sources, and make claims based on that evidence in writing and speaking.

Although most of the sixth-grade standards are organized regionally, there are patterns which the teacher uses to connect the regional studies into larger, world-scale patterns. These are:

- The movement of early humans across continents and their adaptations to the geography and climate of new regions.
- The rise of diverse civilizations, characterized by economies of surplus, centralized states, social hierarchies, cities, networks of trade, art and architecture, and systems of writing.
- The growth of urban societies and changes in societies (social class divisions, slavery, divisions of labor between men and women).
- The development of new political institutions (monarchy, empire, democracy) and new ideas (citizenship, freedom, morality, law).
- The birth and spread of religious and philosophical systems (Judaism, Greek thought, Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism) which responded to human needs and supported social norms and power structures.
- The development and growth of links between societies through trade, diplomacy, migration, conquest, and the diffusion of goods and ideas.

The first section below outlines the development of these themes throughout the world over time. It is divided into three chronological periods: Beginnings to 4000 BCE; 4000-1000 BCE: Kingdoms and Innovations; and 1000 BCE-300 CE: An Age of Empires and Interactions. The second section outlines the development of these themes following the regional structure of the existing 6th-grade standards.

Beginnings to 4000 BCE

Modern humans, *Homo Sapiens*, are members of the Great Ape family. About 25 million years ago a medium-sized primate group split into apes and monkeys; both groups found an ecological niche in trees. Apes didn't have tails, relied primarily on their arms for locomotion by swinging in trees (as opposed to monkeys who primarily used four legs for travel). Apes developed a keener sense of vision; monkeys developed a better sense of smell. Subsequently, the ape family branched into two major lines—hominins and what we now usually call apes. The ape strand led to the present day chimpanzees, bonobos, and gorillas.

Our early ancestors, the hominins, and chimpanzees, our closest non-hominin relative, appeared about 6 million years ago. Both were partially bipedal. By 2.5 million years ago, these early hominins had evolved to walking upright. After passing through the australopithecines (southern ape) stage, the hominins eventually gave rise to our genus *Homo* (our first human-like ancestors), which initially appeared about 2.5 million years ago in Africa. The brains of this new genus were about the same size as chimpanzees but grew

steadily through the next million years. There were several species of these early homo lines whose population began to grow, though very gradually, after they began to make use of tools more extensively. Our early human ancestors evolved larger brains in response to the survival needs of hunting and gathering in small bands, employed rudimentary stone tools for skinning animals and weapons (such as spear heads and knives), developed simple clothing and shelter, and used fire opportunistically. Pair-bonding, which allowed for more extensive for child rearing, contributed to survival success.

There are various theories of how these hominins evolved. Most scholars suggest that the continued growth of brain size necessitated larger food intake. About 2 million years ago, a few of our early human ancestors migrated out of their east African homeland to the rest of that continent and subsequently spread throughout the world --to Europe, and as far east as Indonesia and China. The various species of the homo line continued to evolve and eventually became the more technically advanced *Homo erectus*, *Neanderthals*, and *Denisovans*. Using archeological evidence, such as the carbon dating of bones, stone tools and weapons, DNA evidence of matrilineal and patrilineal descent, the examination of food remains and campsites, students can consider, **How do we know about these early proto-humans? Why did they succeed in replacing other Hominin lines?**

Around 200,000 years ago our direct human ancestors appeared, modern *Homo sapiens* (the wise man), who were anatomically the same as modern humans. At that time there was nothing particularly special about our species

Commented [RD2]: Replace this questions with: “What evidence do we have that these human ancestors existed?” “Why did Homo sapiens eventually succeed in replacing all other hominin species?”

Comment: Paleoanthropologists don’t commonly use the term “proto-humans.” No scientist has any idea of the answer to the second question in the draft other than speculation. Students can ponder the second question I suggest because we have substantial evidence of what made our species so special compared to other hominins.

compared to the other homo species. We co-existed with several other homo lines who also possessed similar brain sizes, walked upright, used fire, ate a variety of foods, were skilled gatherers, progressed from scavengers to hunters of large animals, and used comparable tools. However, *Homo sapiens* were lighter, less muscled, more adaptable, and kept developing larger brains.

About 70,000 years ago *Homo sapiens* began a major transformation. The species underwent a cognitive revolution which allowed us to acquire language, which in turn enabled us to think abstractly and imaginatively and to form social groups that cooperated and planned in ways that ensured their survival. These talents permitted *homo sapiens* to develop more sophisticated tools and inventions, to learn from one another, and to pass technical, cultural, and organizational knowledge from one generation to the next. *Homo sapiens* also began to act collectively in large groups for foraging, hunting, and defense. These talents allowed our species to learn from experience and adapt more easily to a changing conditions. Consequently, modern humans were able to survive the varied and extreme climates found on this planet.

Under one highly regarded explanation, the climate worsened around 160,000 years ago, leaving much of African uninhabitable. The numbers of our immediate ancestors declined precipitously and some sought refuge on the southern coast where they learned to exploit the rich shell food beds for food.

Unlike territory with scattered resources, territory that featured dense collections of resources required a stationary home base and defense against others. These ancestors evolved a genetically encoded prosocial proclivity, the ability to use

Commented [RD3]: I don't know where you got this theory or how regards it highly, but it's new to me. Surely, it's a wild overstatement to say that much of Africa became uninhabitable. It's also misleading because at that point early *Homo sapiens* probably only inhabited the eastern side of the continent.. Is this theorist saying that early *Homo sapiens* disappeared from East Africa? Also this idea of "seeking refuge" on the southern coast (Blombos Cave?) suggests that people migrated there from other parts of Africa like refugees. This is all worded in a way that makes it preposterous. This is not to ignore the tremendous early advances in symbolic expression that took place in South Africa. Read Laura Mitchell's and my book: *Panorama: A World History*, pp 30-32.

Commented [RD4]: Don't burden sixth grade teachers, or anyone for that matter, with this sort of sociological jargon.

sophisticated language and symbols, more advanced conceptual and cognitive capacities, and social lifestyle shifts to encourage sophisticated innovation and cooperation with unrelated individuals. These traits allowed them to better exploit and defend their resource-rich territories against invaders. With their increased brains and ability to cooperate they became even more inventive. Their development of projectile weaponry, especially when coated with poison, was a revolutionary innovation that allowed for safer hunting. (Neanderthals never discovered bows and arrows and many were killed getting too close large animals in the hunt).

The story of how our now fully human ancestors populated the earth starting around 70,000 years ago is fascinating. Although the general narrative is generally understood, some details are known, some controversial, and some yet to be discovered. Students can consider the impact of population pressure, the availability of untapped hunting grounds, warfare, or even a sense of adventure as they consider the evidence for the migration and various routes taken. **Why did modern humans leave Africa? What happened to all the other Hominids in Africa, or the Neanderthals who had evolved from earlier hominins in Europe? How violent or aggressive were these early humans?** In their investigations, students can consider the fact that as the modern humans peopled the world, the other lines became extinct. They can consider how modern humans from Indonesia crossed land bridges and developed the seafaring technology to settle the continent of Australia about 60,000 years ago. And students can develop their own explanations for how 14,000 years our species

Commented [RD5]: “foraging and hunting”

Commented [RD6]: “Hominins” Need consistent spelling.

Commented [RD7]: Need to word this so you don’t imply that Neanderthals evolved from Homo sapiens.

Commented [RD8]: Don’t cram too many questions in here?

Commented [RD9]: Delete or revise. This is another good example of a badly worded question because it implies that early humans WERE violent and aggressive in one measure or another. Moreover, there is no comparative marker here. How violent and aggressive compared to what?

How about instead: “What evidence do researchers have that early humans engaged in violent or aggressive behavior?”

Commented [RD10]:

had populated both North and South America and had peopled every continent except Antarctica (although some islands such as New Zealand and Hawaii were not inhabited until much later).

In all these places people survived by foraging, hunting, and fishing, and they lived in bands, that is, communities typically numbering no more than a few dozen men, women, and children. World population of our species began to rise but very gradually. Often, these bands were loosely associated with larger groups, such as tribes who had a common language and belief systems. For example, when the British conquered Australia in the eighteenth century, they found 300,000 to 700,000 hunter-gatherers organized into between 200 and 600 large social groups (further divided into multiple bands), each with its own language, customs, norms, and belief systems.

Around 10,000 years ago, some humans began to domesticate plants and animals and experiment with farming. Others learned to mine for desired metals and precious stones after smelting was discovered. Their activities led to the development of new ways of life: agriculture in settled villages, trade, and pastoral nomadism. Students investigate why these radical changes began to occur after humans had lived exclusively as gatherers and hunters and still managed to adapt successfully to many climates and climatic changes over hundreds of thousands of years. **Why did some humans start to plant and harvest crops, live in crowded villages, and later build cities, accept the rule of monarchs, and pay taxes? Why did the pace of historical change in certain parts of the world begin to speed up?**

Commented [RD11]: Shorten the first sentence. Too many elements to consider here or too long a time span.

Try this: “Why did some human groups start to work long hours planting and harvesting crops, live in crowded villages, and take orders from chiefs, when our species flourished without doing these things for tens of thousands of years?”

The second question is a huge one and needs to be a bit more graspable for both teachers and students.

Consider: “Why did societies become more complex and why did technology advance faster after humans in some part of the world started farming?”

During this period many technological and social discoveries or inventions occurred building on the previous breakthroughs, such as use of fire, cooking, boats, use of tools for hunting, defense, and daily life, and tools to make tools, language, expressions of emotions, the ability to understand what another person was thinking, planning, pair-bonding, cooperation, bands and tribes, clothing, sewing, containers, and art, including pigmentation, music and dance. The new innovations included domestication of animals and farming, smelting of copper, then bronze, then iron, the plough, twisted rope, musical instruments, beer and wine, religion and ancestor worship, more complex boats, and trade allowed for an increasing population and standard of living. Working in small groups, students can explore the impact of these discoveries and innovations by examining one discovery or invention in-depth to develop and present a short oral presentation that both explains the innovation and speculates as to its overall significance.

4000-1000 BCE: Kingdoms and Innovations

At the beginning of the period between 4000 and 1000 BCE, the earliest complex urban societies, or civilizations, rose. By the end of this period, there were many urban societies, and their interaction had accelerated. During those three millennia, numerous technical and intellectual innovations appeared, especially in the dense agricultural societies that arose in the Middle East (notably Mesopotamia, Syria, Anatolia, and Persia), the Nile Valley of Africa, northern India, China, and the lands around the Aegean Sea. By about 2000 BCE, urban societies also began to emerge in the Americas, starting with the

179 Olmec civilization in Mesoamerica and Chavín in South America. Many
180 inventions and ideas fundamental to modern life appeared, including the wheel,
181 writing, more complex metallurgy, codes of law, mathematics, and astronomy.
182 While cities grew in some areas, hunter-gatherers and village farmers remained
183 in other areas. Increased trade occurred. Global population rose at a faster rate
184 than it had before 4000 BCE.

185 Powerful people (warlords) took control of the tribes in larger areas and
186 eventually the strongest warlords formed states or city-states with governments
187 headed by kings or, very occasionally, queens, often claiming authority from
188 gods and passing on power to their own descendants. Supported by political
189 elites (nobles, officials, warriors) and priests, these monarchs imposed taxes on
190 ordinary city dwellers and rural people to pay for bureaucracies, armies, irrigation
191 works, and monumental architecture. Writing systems were first invented to serve
192 governments, religions, and merchants, and later became means of transmitting
193 religious, scientific, and literary ideas. Some of the religions of this era, such as
194 early Hinduism and Judaism, set the stage for later world belief systems.

195 Migrations continued as farming peoples slowly expanded into tropical Africa
196 and Southeast Asia, North and South America, and the temperate woodlands of
197 Europe. In the steppes of Central Asia, a new way of life and type of society
198 emerged after 4000 BCE. There, communities lived by herding domesticated
199 animals, such as sheep, cattle, or horses. Their economy, called pastoral
200 nomadism, permitted humans to adapt in larger numbers to climates which were
201 too dry for farming. Pastoral nomads lived mainly on the products of their

livestock. They grazed herds over vast areas and came regularly in contact with urban societies, often to trade, sometimes to make war. By the end of this period, urban societies ruled by monarchies had greatly expanded their control over agricultural regions, but many people still lived in small village, pastoral nomad, and hunter-gatherer societies.

1000 BCE-300 CE: An Age of Empires and Interchange

During these 1,300 years, many patterns of change established in the previous era continued, but at a faster pace. The number of cities multiplied, and states appeared in new forms that were bigger, more complex, and more efficient at coercing people and extracting taxes from them. A new form of state developed – the empire. Among the largest states of that era were the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires centered in Mesopotamia, the Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sasanian Empires in Persia, the Kushan Empire in Central Asia, the Maurya Empire in India, and the kingdom of Kush in the upper Nile River valley. The largest of all were the Roman Empire, which came to embrace the entire Mediterranean Sea region and much of Europe, and the Han Empire in China. At the dawn of the first millennium CE, these two states together ruled a small part of the earth's land area, but roughly one-half of the world's population.

A second key development of that era was the establishment of a thicker web of interregional communication and transport, which allowed goods, technologies, and ideas to move long distances. Interlocking networks of roads, such as the Silk Road, and sea lanes in the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Sea, connected empires, kingdoms, and regions of the Eastern Hemisphere with

one another. Merchants and other travelers created similar interconnections in Mesoamerica and along South America's Andean mountain spine. Merchants traveled long distances in caravans and ships to connect farming and urban societies that lay along the rims of seas, deserts, and steppes. In this period, the religions of Hinduism, Judaism, Buddhism, and Christianity and the philosophies of Confucianism and Greek thought emerged and spread within empires and along trade routes. These religious and philosophical systems changed as they developed, in order to address human needs, support social order, and adapt to different societies.

The following section discusses the historical topics designated in the sixth grade state standards. Teachers are encouraged to relate these topics to the Global Overview. Teachers use the guiding questions to focus on course themes and draw comparisons with other regional topics.

Early Humankind and the Development of Human Societies

- How did the environment influence the migrations of early humans? How did early humans adapt to new environments and climate changes?
- How did people live by the gathering and hunting way of life?
- Why did some people develop agriculture and pastoral nomadism? What were the effects of these new ways of life?

In the first unit, students learn about the emergence and migrations of early humans, the gathering and hunting way of life, and the emergence of village agriculture and pastoral nomadism. To frame the topic of the emergence and migrations of early humans, the teacher uses these questions: **How did the**

Commented [RD12]: See my revisions where the questions appear below.

earth’s environment influence the pace and directions of early human migrations? How did early humans adapt to different physical, natural, and climatic environments? For millions of years, the genetic ancestors of humans, known as hominins (or hominids), used stone tools and lived on foods found by gathering and hunting. Archeological evidence shows students that our earliest forebears evolved in eastern Africa and that small bands of those ancestors migrated into Eurasia about 1.9 million years ago, driven by population gains and increased competition for food. Around 800,000 years ago, early humans discovered how to control fire, allowing them to cook food, keep away predators, and burn areas of land in order to flush out game.

Homo sapiens, that is, anatomically modern humans, evolved in Africa around 200,000 years ago. Modern humans adapted well to new environments, developing increasingly diverse stone and bone tools for collecting and processing food. About 100,000 years ago, our species developed the capacity for language, which accelerated technological change. Spoken language and the evolution of pro-social mental and social structures enabled humans to teach complex skills to each other, cooperate with others, pass down ideas to the next generation, and talk about their world and the cosmos.

After leaving Africa 90,000 to 100,000 years ago, humans may have reached Australia 60,000 or more years ago and Europe 40,000 years ago. In the Middle East and Europe, humans encountered Neanderthals, a related hominid species, who became extinct about 28,000 years ago. Early humans reached the Americas from Eurasia at least 12,000 years ago, possibly earlier. Students use

271 maps to identify the patterns of early human migration and settlement which
272 populated the major regions of the world. Reading climate zone maps and
273 studying climate change during the Pleistocene (glacial and interglacial periods)
274 helps students develop an understanding of the effects of climate on the Earth
275 and on the expansion of human settlements. In California EEI lesson 6.1.1,
276 “Paleolithic People: Tools, Tasks and Fire,” students analyze why humans chose
277 certain migration routes, settled in particular locations, developed lifestyles,
278 cultures, and methods to extract, harvest, and consume natural resources to
279 understand how early humans adapted to the natural systems and environmental
280 cycles in different regions, and how these factors influence the settlement of
281 human communities. Students analyze how human migrants might adapt to a
282 colder or hotter climate, growth of human population, competition with another
283 hominid species, floods, or droughts.

284 Although humans made many adaptations to the conditions of their
285 environments, until about 10,000 years ago, they all lived by the same way of life,
286 hunting and gathering. The teacher introduces the first of the ways of life
287 students will study in this course with this framing question: **How did people live**
288 **by the gathering and hunting way of life?** There was a division of labor
289 between women and men, but they contributed equally to supporting the band.
290 Adult men were more likely to travel away from the camp to forage or hunt, while
291 women, who were likely pregnant or caring for small children, collected edible
292 plants and trapped small animals close to home. Because gatherers and hunters

Commented [RD13]: This one has to be changed. Students would be well justified in answering, “They gathered and hunted.”

Try this: Why did the foraging and hunting way of life require that people live in small social groups and cooperate on a basis of social equality?

293 need a large area to support themselves, bands were small. Social cooperation
294 was very important, but there were few social differences between people.

295 To understand the gathering and hunting way of life and appreciate the
296 linguistic and cognitive advantages of *Homo sapiens*, students analyze primary
297 sources from this long time period before written language. Our knowledge of this
298 era depends on evidence from material remains, especially from bones and
299 stone tools, and, more recently, from research on human DNA and long-term
300 climatic and geological change. Students can analyze cave paintings from
301 Chauvet, Lascaux, and Altamira, with pairs of students first answering a
302 descriptive question, such as: **What colors did the artist use? What kinds of**
303 **animals are shown in the painting?** and then making an interpretation about:
304 **What was important to hunter-gatherer people? Why do you think the artist**
305 **painted this?** Student pairs can then share their interpretations, claims, and
306 evidence with the whole class. Students use **academic language** to articulate
307 their observations and interpretations to another student and the whole class,
308 supporting the development of oral discourse **ability**.

309 Students investigate the dramatic changes that took place when some
310 humans began to domesticate plants and animals and settle in one place year
311 round, with these questions: **Why did some people develop agriculture and**
312 **pastoral nomadism? What were the effects of these new ways of life?**
313 Teachers begin by asking students why a gatherer might start planting seeds.
314 **How might a hunter start to tame an animal?** Archaeological evidence
315 indicates that in the Middle East, and probably Egypt, foraging bands settled near

Commented [RD14]: The first question is too vague. And there was probably more than one artist. I like the “why do you think” and should see it in more questions. “Why did” implies that there is a definitive answer, when often, especially in relation to Paleolithic history, the scholars themselves can only hypothesize and interpret. Students should understand that. Cave paintings almost certainly had ritual meaning for the local society, but we will never know exactly what that was.

Try: Why do you think artists painted these pictures of animals and did it deep inside caves where few people were likely to see them?

Commented [RD15]: What is “academic language” for California sixth graders?

Commented [RD16]: New paragraph needed here.

Commented [RD17]: Don’t try to cram agriculture and pastoral nomadism into one highly general question. The second question is also sweeping. Are these questions designed to be posed only at the end of a unit, when students are asked to look back on what they have studied and try to summarize on a grand scale? If, on the other hand, the questions are intended to prompt classroom thinking and activities, they are not help in getting a specific classroom project going.

How about: Why do you think experts have often said that people in certain parts of the world and over many generations made the huge change from foraging and hunting to farming without consciously knowing that they were doing it?

Commented [RD18]: I would just delete this one. The assumption is wrong. Individual hunters did not find completely wild dogs or hogs and “tame” them. The important issue here is animal domestication. Taming is another thing entirely. Zebras can be tamed, but they’ve never been domesticated. The course description does not really take up early animal domestication here, so I would leave it alone.

I’m suggesting a question about horse domestication below.

stands of edible grasses, the genetic ancestors of wheat and other grains. People began deliberately to sow plants that had favorable qualities, for example, varieties that were large, tasty, and easy to cook. In this way, they gradually domesticated those plants. Domesticated plants and animals became increasingly important to human diets regionally and turned people into farmers, that is, *producers* of food rather than simply *collectors* of it.

This huge change introduced a new way of life for humans – village agriculture. They could therefore live in larger settlements and accumulate more material goods than when they foraged for a living. Teachers emphasize that agriculture involved not only the act of farming but also a whole new way of life based on food production. Improved production meant that not everyone in a village had to spend all of their time securing the food supply. Food surplus also invited conflict with neighboring tribes eager to expand their own reserves. Another result of village agriculture is the development of tools. Early farmers gradually developed more varied stone tools, such as sickles to cut grain and grinding stones to make flour. They used fire to transform clay into durable pottery. They wove wool, cotton, and linen into textiles. Because the early millennia of agriculture involved more sophisticated stone tools, it is known as the Neolithic, or New Stone Age.

One of the major effects of the village agricultural way of life was an increase in social differences. In early villages adult men and women probably worked together to perform many necessary tasks and treated each other with near equality. Because villages likely included several extended families living closely

together, however, leaders inevitably emerged to guide group decisions and settle personal conflicts. Also, as soon as some families accumulated more stored food than did others and appointed guards to protect their wealth, the conditions for social inequality appeared. Teachers may ask students to examine differences in the contents of graves that archaeologists have excavated—some graves having jewelry, shells, or other fine materials and some having none of these things—for evidence about social ranking and inequality in early agricultural communities.

Agriculture developed independently in different areas of the world between 12,000 and 5,000 years ago and gradually spread outward from those areas. Students should compare physical and environmental maps with maps of the first sites of food production to make interpretations.

In some areas of the world, such as the steppes of Central Asia, the climate was unfavorable for farming, but ideal for supporting herds of domesticated animals, such as sheep, cattle, or horses. The teacher may pose this question: Why do you think that domestication of horses and success at horseback riding more than 6,000 years ago contributed to rising populations of pastoral nomads in Central Asia? In these areas, some people created a new way of life based on the products of their livestock. They were nomadic and did not settle in villages. In fact, they were highly mobile, and often came into contact with settled societies, often to trade and sometimes to attack and conquer. By 4000 BCE there were three main ways of life followed by humans – gathering and hunting, village agriculture, and pastoral nomadism.

The Early Civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush

- How did civilizations, complex urban societies, develop in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Kush?
- What environmental factors helped civilizations grow? What impact did civilizations and complex urban societies have on the surrounding environment?
- How did people's lives change as states and empires took over these areas (increase in social differences, rule by monarchs, laws)?
- From 4000 BCE to 500 BCE, how did contact, trade, and other links grow among the urban societies of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Kush, India, and the eastern Mediterranean?

Commented [RD19]: See my suggested revisions below.

Between 10,000 and 4,000 BCE, farming spread widely across Africa and Eurasia. In the valleys of the Tigris and Euphrates (Fertile Crescent) and Nile rivers, people adapted to the rivers' flood cycles and the related seasonal cycles of plants and animals. Their adaptations allowed them to produce a surplus of food, which led to other changes in their cultures. Students learn that people who lived near the banks of those rivers began to use irrigation techniques to control water and extend farming, despite an increasingly arid climate. A similar process got under way in the Indus River valley in India and in the Huang He (Yellow) River valley in northern China some centuries later. To frame the study of the emergence of civilizations, the teacher uses the question: **Why did complex urban societies (civilizations) first emerge in Mesopotamia and Egypt**

385 **considering that both regions were extremely arid? How did the natural and**
386 **physical environment in which Kush emerged as a complex society differ**
387 **from conditions in Mesopotamia and Egypt?** When communities began to
388 intensify farming with new techniques, they were able to produce surplus food.
389 Early farmers increased the size of their farms and used more resources in order
390 to increase their yield. Focusing on the relationships between resource
391 requirements, agricultural production, and population growth, students learn that
392 the population growth near agricultural areas was a first step in the development
393 of larger settlements and cities. The surpluses they produced led to the rise of
394 more complex social, economic, and political systems in those valleys.

395 The civilization of Mesopotamia, located in the valley of the Euphrates and
396 Tigris Rivers (modern Iraq and part of Syria), and Egypt, which stretched along
397 the Nile River, both arose in the fourth millennium BCE. Kush, a civilization in the
398 upper Nile River region south of Egypt emerged in the second millennium BCE.
399 Teachers introduce students to the environmental roots of civilization with this
400 question: **Why could populations expand, complex social organization**
401 **emerge, and cities be built in the Tigris-Euphrates and Nile valleys but not**
402 **in the surrounding areas? In what ways did the inhabitants of early**
403 **complex societies in these valleys alter the physical and natural**
404 **environments?**

405 All these societies depended on their river locations to build dense
406 agricultural societies. First students examine maps to identify the environmental
407 factors, such as climate, topography, and flood patterns, that caused these

civilizations to rise up along rivers. The teacher might use either of the California EEI lessons 6.2.1.River Systems and Ancient Peoples, or 6.2.2 Advances in Ancient Civilizations. These lessons emphasize environmental causes and effects and the influence that the rise of civilization along these rivers had on the organization, economies, and belief systems of Mesopotamia and Egypt.

Teachers guide students through the development of each of these three civilizations separately, while frequently pointing out connections, similarities, and differences among the civilizations (and also the Harappa civilization along the Indus River and Chinese civilization along the Huang He [Yellow] River). The following section discusses Mesopotamia first, followed by Egypt, and then by Kush.

In the third millennium BCE, Mesopotamia was divided into a number of kingdoms. Beginning in Sumer, the region of southern Mesopotamia, those early kingdoms were dominated by large walled cities, each enclosing a royal palace and a temple dedicated to the local god, along with densely packed housing for the population. Walls were built around many of these cities in response to aggression by neighboring kingdoms and competing warlords seeking to expand their territory through conquest. By around 3,000 BCE, a second cluster of cities arose in northern Mesopotamia and the area of modern-day Syria. Rulers of these cities claimed to possess authority divinely bestowed by their city's god or goddess. The city-states of Mesopotamia frequently fought one another over resources, but they also formed alliances. At the end of the third millennium,

430 Sargon of Akkad (2270-2215 BCE) managed briefly to forge a unified empire
431 through conquest.

432 Students also examine the connections between Mesopotamia and other
433 areas with this question: **How did trade and cultural exchanges grow among**
434 **the urban societies of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Kush, the eastern**
435 **Mediterranean, and India in the third and second millennia BCE?** Trade was
436 extensive, not only among the Mesopotamian kingdoms, but also between
437 Mesopotamia and surrounding regions. The land had rich soil that produced
438 abundant crops, but it had no minerals. Merchants imported a red stone called
439 carnelian from the Indus Valley, a blue stone called lapis lazuli from what is now
440 Afghanistan, and silver from Anatolia (modern Turkey), which were used for
441 jewelry and decorations in temples and palaces. From the Elamites on the
442 Iranian plateau, merchants imported wood, copper, lead, silver, and tin. In some
443 periods, trade and diplomatic exchanges took place between Mesopotamia and
444 Egypt. Teachers introduce students to Mesopotamia's numerous technological
445 and social innovations, including the wheel, the wooden plow, the seed drill, and
446 improved bronze metallurgy, as well as advances in mathematics, astronomical
447 measurement, and law. Essential for the functioning of the legal system and of
448 the administrative structure of Mesopotamian kingdoms was the cuneiform
449 writing system. The signs were written on clay tablets and could be used to
450 represent phonetically many ancient languages, including Sumerian and
451 Akkadian, the languages of Mesopotamia. Mesopotamians had a complex legal

452 system and written laws, of which Hammurabi's are the best preserved, though
453 not the earliest.

454 Next students explore the development of Mesopotamia society with this
455 question: **Did the lives of ordinary men and women change as a result of the**
456 **rise of centralized states or empires in Mesopotamia? In what ways might**
457 **they have changed?** In the Mesopotamian cities and states, a small elite group
458 of political leaders (officials, warriors, "nobles") and priests held the most wealth
459 and power, while the majority of people remained poor farmers, artisans, or
460 slaves. Supported by the elites, kings established dynasties, and built large
461 palaces. Social groups were increasingly divided into a true social hierarchy.

462 Mesopotamia was a patriarchy, which meant that men had more power than
463 women. However, priestesses and noblewomen did have some access to power.

464 For example, Sargon placed his daughter in the powerful position of high
465 priestess of the moon god, starting a tradition that continued in the reigns of
466 subsequent kings. Monarchs' wives sometimes controlled their own estates. In
467 the Mesopotamian cities (and in all civilizations) the increase in social differences
468 was a dramatic change for humans.

| Grade Six Classroom Example: Hammurabi's Code |
|--|
| To build student understanding of how human life changed in these early civilizations, Mrs. Stanton organizes a close reading of excerpts from Hammurabi's laws. Knowing that the text will be challenging for English Learners, she identifies the key passages in the text, the unfamiliar names, the academic |

vocabulary, and the literacy challenges that students will face. After putting students in groups of four, Mrs. Stanton distributes excerpted texts containing the first sentence of Hammurabi's prologue and the first six phrases of the second sentence (for all groups) and sets of six laws (different selections for each group which all show differentiated punishments for different classes of people.) Mrs. Stanton then explains that students will be analyzing this primary source to gather evidence to answer the question: **How did people's lives change under the rule of Hammurabi and the civilization in Mesopotamia?** She reminds students of the egalitarian life of the hunter-gatherers and limited hierarchy of villages. The students read their texts silently first and then discuss in their groups: **What is this text about? What crimes do the laws punish?** For the second reading, Mrs. Stanton guides students through a sentence deconstruction chart of the first sentence, followed by a whole class discussion of Hammurabi's claims to divine authority as a protector of the people. For the third reading, the students mark up the text and write annotations in the margins. The teacher then models the structure of a social hierarchy pyramid on the board. For the fourth reading, each group analyzes their selection of laws, identifies the social groups, draws a social hierarchy diagram of those groups, and reports to the class orally and in writing. After class discussion, students answer text-dependent questions in a fifth reading. The students then write a summary paragraph about Hammurabi's Laws, using the words: monarch, prince, rule, Babylon, Marduk, conquered, righteousness, and social hierarchy.

CA HSS Standards: 6.2.4

CA HSS Analysis Skills (6–8): Research, Evidence, and Point of View 3,
Historical Interpretation 1

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: RI.6.3, RI.6.10, SL.6.1, SL.6.4, L.6.4, RH.6–8.1,
RH.6–8.2, RH.6–8.4, WHST.6–8.2, WHST.6–8.9

CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.6.1, 2, 6, 11; ELD.PII.6.1

469

470 Next students look at how the states and empires in Mesopotamia changed
471 over time, focused on this question: **What were fundamental differences in**
472 **political and social organization between city-states, which thrived for long**
473 **periods in Mesopotamia, and empires, such as the one Sargon built or the**
474 **Persian empire centered on Iran.** Over the centuries, the cities of Mesopotamia
475 were divided into multiple states, conquered by invaders, and combined into new
476 states. While it is not possible or desirable to teach all the states and groups that
477 ruled over Mesopotamia, it is critical that students understand the importance of
478 the Persian Empire. The names of the empire changed often with changes in the
479 ruling groups (Achaemenids, Seleucids, Parthians, Sasanians), but the Persian
480 Empire maintained its continuity and its domination over Persia, most of
481 Mesopotamia, and sometimes Syria, Egypt, and northeastern India from c. 500
482 BCE to c. 630 CE. It was the primary political and cultural presence in western
483 Asia during that period. Because the Persians fought wars with the ancient
484 Greeks, Greek writers often criticized the Persians. However, the Persian ruled
485 over a very large empire that extended from the Aegean Sea to the Indus River

Commented [RD20]: The question you pose has already been asked, and it's a sort of vague and all-encompassing question that can find little use in the classroom.

486 and that included populations of great cultural diversity. After conquest by
487 Alexander the Great, Persia became a Hellenistic state under the Seleucids until
488 the Parthians conquered the area. The Parthians nevertheless maintained some
489 Hellenistic features and trade and diplomatic connections with other Hellenistic
490 states from Carthage to Bactria. Parthian Persia was the main rival of the Roman
491 Empire in the eastern Mediterranean. The Sasanians, who took over in 224 CE,
492 actively promoted their special Persian identity and Zoroastrianism as a state
493 religion. As the main heir of Mesopotamian civilization, the Persian Empire
494 played as large a role in world history as the Greeks or Romans.

495 . As they study Egypt, students focus on the question: **In what ways did the**
496 **geography and annual flow of the Nile River contribute to the rise and**
497 **endurance of a centralized state in Egypt?** They learn that from 3000 to 1500,
498 unlike Mesopotamia, Egypt was usually united under a single king. Egyptian
499 kings claimed not only to have divine approval but to be deities themselves. The
500 Egyptians built immense pyramid tombs and grand temples for their rulers.
501 Teachers focus students' attention on the social and political power structures
502 with this question: The Egyptians prized order (*ma'at*) in all aspects of life,
503 including social rules and even careful preparations for the afterlife. Their social
504 hierarchy was an elaborate structure dominated by small elite groups of political
505 leaders (regional lords, officials, and warriors) and priests. The teacher points
506 out the similarity to Mesopotamia. Students analyze the Egyptian writing system
507 in comparison with Mesopotamian cuneiform. Both used a combination of signs
508 that represented sounds (phonemes) and ones that signified word or phrase

Commented [RD21]: "Multicultural tolerance" is over the top. Empires are multicultural by definition, but tolerance was a some-of-the-time thing. Let's not romanticize ancient wealth-accumulating regimes.

Commented [RD22]: I would not invoke "nationalism" as a conceptual term for any period before the late 18th century.

Commented [RD23]: This question is problematic because "dominated by religion and kingship" has no clear meaning. It implies that other kinds of societies got along fine without religion and its dominating effects. All early states, because they WERE states, had monarchs. I would just delete that sentence.

Commented [RD24]: This same question was asked in relation to Mesopotamia. States and empires did not "take over" these regions. See my earlier revision of this question and perhaps repeat it here for Egypt.

509 meanings (logograms). The Egyptians, however, used hieroglyphs and papyrus
510 and stone as writing surfaces rather than clay tablets.

511 Around 1500 BCE, Egypt entered the era known as the New Kingdom. Kings
512 such as Thutmose III expanded the Egyptian empire far up the Nile River into
513 what is now Sudan, and into the Levant, that is, the coastal region at the eastern
514 end of the Mediterranean. Teachers highlight Queen Hatshepsut (ca. 1479-1458
515 BCE) and King Ramses II, also known as Ramses the Great (1279-1212 BCE).
516 During Hatshepsut's reign, as throughout the whole New Kingdom, Egyptian art
517 and architecture flourished, and trade with distant lands brought enormous
518 wealth into Egypt. Ramses II's long reign was a time of great prosperity. He
519 fought battles to maintain the Egyptian Empire and built innumerable temples
520 and monuments throughout Egypt. Students can analyze artistic representations
521 of Hatshepsut, Ramses, and other pharaohs to make interpretations about the
522 divine authority of the pharaoh (how artists represented their power, what
523 qualities a pharaoh should have, and how Egyptian pharaohs were similar to and
524 different from Hammurabi.) After the New Kingdom period, different empires,
525 such as Kush, Persia, and Rome, took over Egypt.

526 Egypt held long trade connections in Eurasia and Africa. Teachers return to
527 **question:** Representatives of the king sailed up the Nile to Kush and penetrated
528 the Red Sea coasts to obtain incense, ivory, and ebony wood. To the northeast,
529 they acquired timber from the forests of Lebanon. New Kingdom pharaohs also
530 nurtured ties through treaties and marriage with Middle Eastern states, notably
531 Babylonia (in Mesopotamia), Mittani (in Syria), and the kingdom of the Hittites in

Commented [RD25]: This question takes on way too much in time period and regions encompassed to have classroom value. ALL OF THE QUESTIONS IN THE COURSE DESCRIPTION SHOULD FOCUS ON CONCRETE EVENTS AND DEVELOPMENTS AND DEAL WITH ISSUES OF CAUSE, CONSEQUENCE, AND COMPARISON. Why embed in the Framework questions that have no specific utility?

532 Anatolia. Diplomatic envoys and luxury goods circulated among these royal
533 courts, so that they formed the world's first international community of states.
534 Students may create maps showing the trade routes and products that circulated
535 among Egypt, Mesopotamia, Syria, Anatolia, Persia, and South Asia, as well as
536 in the eastern Mediterranean. Students recognize that the number of states and
537 the intensity of trade connections increased steadily from 1500 BCE to 300 CE.

538 The teacher transitions to the study of African civilization of Kush with this
539 question: **How did the physical and natural environment of the region where**
540 **Kush emerged differ from the environment in Egypt. Why could both of**
541 **regions support complex urban societies?** Kush lay in the upper Nile Valley,
542 where rainfall was higher and where farm and cattle land stretched far beyond
543 the banks of the river. Kush had complex relations with Egypt. In some periods,
544 Egyptian pharaohs dominated Kush, taxing the population and extracting goods,
545 particularly gold. After the New Kingdom faded, Kush reasserted its
546 independence, though maintaining close contacts with Egypt. Next students
547 explore the question: **What historical evidence do we have of contacts**
548 **between Kush and Egypt and of Egyptian influence on Kush's society and**
549 **culture? What historical evidence do we have of aspects of Kush's culture**
550 **that were independent of Egyptian influence?** Teachers may introduce
551 comparisons between the societies of Kush and Egypt through pictorial
552 representations of the two architectural traditions. For example, kings of Kush
553 built pyramids, although they were smaller than Egypt's structures. In the first
554 millennium BCE, however, Kush developed a distinctive cultural style that

Commented [RD26]: The querying about the "surrounding environment" seems inexplicable to me. What would teachers do with this question?

included painted pottery, the elephant as an artistic motif, an alphabetic writing system, and a flourishing iron industry. The similarities between Egypt and Kush, and the distinct features of each civilization, offer an opportunity for students to analyze how one culture adopts products, styles, and ideas from another culture, but adapts those borrowings to fit its own needs and preferences. Another way to compare these civilizations is to have students trace how popular goods traded in the Egyptian world were related to the natural resources available in Egypt and Kush. They learn that Egyptian trade influenced the development of laws, policies, and incentives on the use and management of ecosystem goods and services in the eastern Mediterranean and Nile Valley, which had the long-term effects on the functioning and health of those ecosystems, through California EEI lessons 6.2.6/8, “Egypt and Kush: A Tale of Two Kingdoms.”

In the eighth century BCE, Kush’s ruler took advantage of political weakness in Egypt to conquer it, uniting a huge stretch of the Nile Valley under the twenty-fifth dynasty for nearly a century. Mapping the trade of Kush merchants with the Arabian Peninsula, India, and equatorial Africa shows students how networks of trade expanded to more and more areas. The Kush state did not seriously decline until the fourth century CE.

The Ancient Israelites (Hebrews)

- What were the beliefs and religious practices of the ancient Israelites?
How did the religious practices of Judaism change and develop over time?

- How did the environment, the history of the Israelites, and their interactions with other societies shape their religion?

- How did early Judaism support individuals, rulers, and societies?

Commented [RD27]: See revisions below.

The ancient Israelites, also known as the Hebrew people, emerged in the eastern Mediterranean coastal region about the twelfth century BCE. To begin the unit, the teacher introduces this question: **How did the environment, the history of the Israelites, and their interactions with other societies shape their religion?** Originally a semi-nomadic pastoral people living on the

Commented [RD28]: I will leave this one alone, but try to substitute a question that teachers and students might actually grapple with.

Mesopotamian periphery, by the eleventh century BCE they organized the kingdom of Israel. Founding a capital in the city of Jerusalem, they terraced the hillsides in their land and built up an agricultural economy. While their state did not long survive, their religion, which became known as Judaism, made an enduring contribution of morality and ethics to Western civilization.

In their study of Judaism as a monotheistic religion, students also have the opportunity to analyze how the religion changed over time. Students focus on the questions: **How were particular moral and social values manifested in the**

Commented [RD29]: The first question is, like so many in the draft, is purely descriptive, calling for a recitation of facts. The second question, to be useful, would have to focus in on a particular practice.

fundamental teachings and practices of Judaism? While many of main teachings of Judaism, such as a weekly day of rest, observance of law, practice of righteousness and compassion, and belief in one God, originated in the early traditions of the Jews, other early traditions disappeared over time to be replaced by increased emphasis on morality and commitment to study. The teacher poses this historical investigation question to students: as they read selected excerpts

Commented [RD30]: The question is repeated from above. I would delete it as way too broad.

600 from the Torah, the first five books of the Hebrew Bible (Tanakh), which
601 Christians refer to as the Old Testament.

602 Judaism was heavily influenced by the environment, the history of the
603 Israelites, and their interactions with other societies. The students return to the
604 **question:** The many farming metaphors in the Torah show the
605 pastoral/agricultural environment. The fragile position of Canaan in the Fertile
606 Crescent between more powerful neighboring states dramatically affected the
607 history of the Israelites. The Exodus from Egypt was an event of great
608 significance to Jewish law and belief, especially the concept of a special
609 relationship or covenant between the Israelites and God. After the Exodus, Saul,
610 David, and Solomon—three successive kings who probably lived in the eleventh
611 and tenth centuries BCE—united the land of Israel into a state. However, after
612 Solomon's reign, the unified kingdom split into two: Israel in the north and Judah
613 (from which we get the words Judaism and Jews) in the south.

614 In addition to paying attention to change over time, the teacher asks students
615 to consider: **How did early Judaism support individuals, rulers, and**
616 **societies?** Between the tenth and six centuries BCE, Assyria and then
617 Babylonia absorbed all of Mesopotamia, some of Anatolia, and the Levant,
618 including the two Jewish states, into their huge empires. The Babylonians
619 deported many Jews to Mesopotamia, but in 539 BCE, Cyrus the Great, emperor
620 of the new empire of Persia, allowed the exiled Jews to return home. Later their
621 homeland was taken over by both Greek and Roman rulers. In 70 CE, the
622 Roman army destroyed the Jews' temple in Jerusalem. As Jews lost their states

Commented [RD31]: Question is repeated from above.

Commented [RD32]: This nebulous question is posed for every society in the sixth grade draft. It has no concrete meaning.

and spread out into many other lands, their religious practice and community life had to adapt. During the Babylonian period, exiled Jews wrote down the sacred texts that had previously been orally transmitted. When the temple was destroyed, those texts were carried to new communities and preserved and studied by religious teachers or sages, such as Yohanan ben Zaccai in the first century CE, and passed on to younger generations. Many Jews left Canaan, dispersing to lands throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe. They carried with them the beliefs, traditions, and laws that served them in constituting new social and economic communities in many lands.

Ancient Greece

- How did the environment of the Greek peninsula and islands, the Anatolian coast, and the surrounding seas affect the development of Greek societies?
- What were the differences in point of view and perspective between the Persians and the Greeks, and between Athenians and Spartans?
- What were the political forms adopted by Greek urban societies? What were the achievements and limitations of Athenian democracy?
- How did Greek thought (a cultural package of mythology, humanistic art, emphasis on reason and intellectual development, and historical, scientific and literary forms) support individuals, states, and societies?

- How did Greek trade, travel, and colonies, followed by the conquests of Alexander the Great and the spread of Hellenistic culture, affect increasing connections among regions in Afroeurasia?

In this unit students learn about the ancient Greek world, which was centered on the Aegean Sea, including both the Greek peninsula and the west coast of Anatolia (modern Turkey). They begin with the question: **How did the**

environment of the Aegean region affect the development of Greek

societies? An elongated coastline and numerous islands stimulated seaborne trade, as well as easy communication between one community and another. The peninsula's interior of mountains and deep valleys, by contrast, encouraged the independence of small communities and city-states, rather than a unified empire. Several waves of migration through the area brought significant changes to the population and culture. Greeks were oriented toward the sea, dependent on trade to feed themselves, and willing to move and settle colonies.

The ancient Greek world developed on the periphery of the Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilizations. Greek foundations were laid by the Minoan civilization on Crete and the Mycenaeans on the Greek peninsula. In the eighth century BCE, Greek-speaking people began a major expansion. They developed more productive agriculture, traded olive oil and wine to distant ports, and founded colonies around the Black Sea, on the northern African coast, and in Sicily and southern Italy. These developments contributed to an increasing sense of shared Greek identity, as well as interchange of ideas and goods with Egyptians, Phoenicians, and other neighboring peoples. Around 800 BCE, the

Commented [RD33]: This one isn't bad, but avoid the message that the peninsula was the "real" Greece and the Anatolian coast was apart from ancient Greece in any cultural sense whatsoever.

667 Greek language was written down, and shortly afterwards, Homer wrote the *Iliad*
668 and the *Odyssey*, two foundational epic poems, which shed light on the
669 Mycenaean world of fearless warriors who valued public competition and
670 individual glory.

671 Next teachers introduce the focus question: **What distinctions can you**
672 **make between Aegean Greece and Persia in terms of political organization**
673 **or religious traditions?** The Greek city-states engaged in a pivotal conflict with
674 the Persian (Achaemenid) Empire in the fifth century BCE, and Greek
675 identification of the Persians as their enemies has heavily influenced later
676 European and American perceptions. The Persian Achaemenid Empire was
677 centered in present-day Iran and had conquered Mesopotamia, Syria, Egypt, and
678 Anatolia. Its rulers represented themselves as agents of Ahuramazda, the
679 supreme god in the regionally important religion of Zoroastrianism. The Persians
680 subjugated the Greek city-states of western Anatolia, but they failed in three
681 attempts to invade the Greek peninsula and defeat the Greeks, including those in
682 the cities of Athens and Sparta, the most powerful city-states. Herodotus (ca 484-
683 425 BCE) was a Greek scholar who wrote a vivid narrative of these events in *The*
684 *Persian Wars*, the first history book. The clear distinction between the Greeks
685 and Persians and the continuing influence of Greek sources (rather than a
686 balance between Greek and Persian sources) gives the teacher a good
687 opportunity to teach students about point of view or perspective. **Students can**
688 **use images of the palace art at Persepolis, particularly the tribute bearers**

Commented [RD34]: The comparative setup here is good, but the question is too vaguely worded for students to get a handle on.

staircase, to see the differences between the ways the Greeks represented the
Persians and the Persians represented themselves.

Commented [RD35]: How would the Persian imagery show how the Greeks represented the Persians?

Because the Greeks experimented with so many different forms of government and wrote so much about politics, this is the ideal point for teachers to focus on government types and citizenship, with the questions: **How did political and social organization differ among the leading Greek city-states? What were the achievements and limitations of Athenian democracy?** In contrast to large empires such as the Persian Achaemenids, the Greeks organized the city-state, or *polis*, with central government authority, control of surrounding farmland, and the concept of citizenship. In most city-states, the earliest rulers were wealthy aristocrats, but they were eventually replaced by tyrants, or personal dictators, and later by oligarchies, that is, small groups of privileged males. A major exception to this pattern was Athens, where a series of reforms in the sixth century broadened the base of civic participation and paved the way for a limited democratic system in the following century. In political and cultural terms, Athens in the fifth century BCE was a highly innovative city. Students may compare its system of direct democracy with modern representative democracy. In Athens, every adult male citizen could vote on legislation, and citizens were chosen for key offices by lot. These principles ensured that decision-making lay mostly in the hands of average citizens. Students may analyze the advantages and limits of this system. For example, women, foreigners, and slaves were excluded from all political participation. In contrast to democratic Athens, Sparta was nearly the equivalent of a permanent

Commented [RD36]: This question is essentially presented above

712 army base, its male citizens obligated to full-time military training and rigorous
713 discipline. To investigate the **question**: students use short quotations from
714 Xenophon's writing about the Spartans (about the training of boys and girls) to
715 contrast with short quotations from *Pericles's Funeral Oration*, recorded by
716 Thucydides (from the first four sentences of the third paragraph which address
717 Athenian democracy and self-image, and the fifth paragraph, which contrasts
718 Athenian and Spartan military training.) Since the sentences in these sources are
719 long and complex, the teacher has students underline the subjects, circle the
720 verbs, and draw boxes around the complements or objects of the sentence,
721 points out parallel phrases and clauses, and guides students through identifying
722 references. After this literacy activity, the teacher guides students through
723 identifying the perspectives of Xenophon and Pericles. While Xenophon was an
724 Athenian who greatly admired the Spartans, Pericles was the leader of Athens in
725 the Peloponnesian War against Sparta (431-404 BCE). His funeral oration was
726 propaganda designed to build Athenian morale and support for the war. The
727 teacher then divides the students into groups, and assigns them text-dependent
728 questions. For each of primary sources, students write out a statement of the
729 author's perspective and one piece of evidence in the text (such as a loaded
730 word or a statement that favors one side). Fighting between Greek city-states
731 was chronic and destructive. Athens at that time ruled large areas of the Aegean
732 basin, but Sparta's victory in the Peloponnesian War brought the Athenian
733 empire to an end. It also ended the classical age of Greece. Conflicts among the

734 city-states contributed to the military conquest of Greece by Philip II of
735 Macedonia.

736 The cultural achievements of the classical Greeks were numerous. Teachers
737 have students consider the question: **How would you define “naturalistic” art?**
738 **Why do you think the Greeks favored it? What are some examples of art**
739 **from other ancient societies or our own time that are valued but are not**
740 **naturalistic?** Athens produced several philosophers (Socrates, Plato, Aristotle),
741 historians (Herodotus, Thucydides), and orators (Demosthenes, Pericles). It also
742 nurtured drama, both tragedy (Sophocles, Euripides) and comedy
743 (Aristophanes). The Greek art and architecture of the era emphasized naturalistic
744 representations of human forms and buildings of beautiful proportions. The rich
745 tales of Greek mythology influenced all forms of literature and art. Students may
746 consider examples of ways in which Greek culture has had an enduring influence
747 on modern society.

748 Next students investigate how Greek culture spread in the Hellenistic era,
749 with the question: **Why do you think that Greek thought (a cultural package**
750 **of mythology, naturalistic art, graceful architecture, emphasis on**
751 **philosophical reasoning, and historical, scientific and literary investigation)**
752 **proved to be an attractive model of cultural life for peoples in much of the**
753 **Mediterranean and Middle Eastern regions?** Philip II’s son Alexander of
754 Macedonia (ruled 336-323) led a military campaign of unprecedented scope,
755 conquering the Persian Empire, Egypt, Central Asia, and even to the Indus River
756 valley. Following his death, his generals and their sons carved his short-lived

Commented [RD37]: Watch out for “reason” since using that word alone can imply that Greeks “reasoned” in the sense of engaging in rational thought more effectively than other peoples in the world, which is plainly unsupportable.

empire into separate states. The following two centuries are known as the Hellenistic period. “Hellenistic” refers to the influence of Greek cultural forms in regions far beyond the Aegean, though in fact a lively interchange of products and ideas took place in the broad region from the Mediterranean to India. Athenian democracy did not survive, but Greek ideas, such as language, sculpture, and city planning, mingled creatively with the cultural styles of Egypt, Persia, and India. For example, the Egyptian goddess Isis took on a Greek-like identity and came to be venerated widely in the Hellenistic lands. The era also brought innovations in science and mathematics, for example, the principles of geometry came from Euclid, who lived in the Hellenistic Egyptian city of Alexandria. During the Hellenistic period, exchanges of products, ideas, and technologies across Afroeurasia increased greatly and penetrated into many more regions, culminating with connections to China via the Silk Road. Cosmopolitan Hellenistic cities became sites of encounter for people of different cultures, religions, and regions. Eventually, the Hellenistic kingdoms west of Persia succumbed to the greater military power of Rome, which in turn absorbed many aspects of Greek culture.

The Early Civilizations of India

- How did the environment influence the emergence and decline of the Harappa civilization?
- How did the religion of Hinduism support individuals, rulers, and societies?

- How did the religion of Buddhism support individuals, rulers, and societies?
- During the Harappa civilization, the Vedic period, and the Maurya Empire, how did the connections between India and other regions of Afroeurasia increase?

Commented [RD38]: See my suggested changes below.

In this unit students learn about ancient societies in India. They begin with the environment: **What impact did the physical and natural environment have on both the emergence and decline of the Harappan civilization?** The earliest civilization, known as Harappan civilization after one of its cities, was centered in the Indus River valley, though its cultural style spread widely from present-day Afghanistan to the upper Ganga plain (Ganges River). The Indus River and its tributaries, along with Saraswati (or Sarasvati) River, flow from the Himalaya mountains southward across the plain now called the Punjab, fan out into a delta, and pour into the Arabian Sea. **The river valley drainage area was twice that of both the Tigris-Euphrates and Nile valleys, and its soil was very rich.** Lessons two and four of the California EEI unit 6.5.1, “The Rivers and Ancient Empires of China and India,” have students locate and describe the physical features of the Indus and Ganges river systems in India. Investigating regional seasonal cycles, especially the summer monsoons, students provide examples of how these cycles benefitted the permanent settlement of early Indian civilization, helping them to recognize that humans depend on, benefit from, and can alter the cycles that occur in the natural systems where they live.

Commented [RD39]: Re UBEROI: Their change is fine, although there’s some ambiguity about the meaning of “size.” How about “The river valley drainage area was twice that of the Tigris-Euphrates or Nile valleys.”

801 Arising in the third millennium BCE, the Harappan civilization attained its
802 zenith between about 2600 and 1900 BCE, with an estimated population of five
803 million. It was discovered by archaeologists in the 1920s. Digs have revealed that
804 many Harappan cities, including Harappa and Mohenjo-daro, were well planned
805 with streets laid out in grids and well-engineered sewers. Artifacts include
806 pottery, seals, statues, jewelry, tools, and toys. The seals contain writing that has
807 not yet been deciphered. Some of the statues and figurines show features that
808 are all present in modern Hinduism, such as a male figure that resembles the
809 Hindu God Shiva in meditating posture. Evidence reveals active commerce
810 between the cities of the Harappan civilization as well as foreign trade with
811 Mesopotamia by sea. The Harappan civilization steadily declined after 1900
812 BCE, perhaps owing to ecological factors such as seismic events, deforestation,
813 salt buildup in the soil, and persistent drought, including the drying up of the
814 Sarasvati River around 2000 BCE.

815 Indian history then entered the Vedic period (ca. 2000-500 BCE), an era
816 named for the *Vedas*, Sanskrit religious texts passed on for generations through
817 a complex oral tradition. Sanskrit is a language in the Indic family, which is part of
818 the much larger Indo-European language family that also includes nearly all of
819 the European languages, including Latin and English. The Indic group includes
820 most languages of northern India, such as Hindi and Bengali. Since the script on
821 Harappan seals has not been deciphered, the language that Harappan society
822 spoke remains a mystery. It is known that speakers of Indic languages were
823 present in northern India early in the Vedic period, after Harappan urban society

Commented [RD40]: Re Uberoi: Good to add this specificity about population, but comparison to world population is too uncertain that period.

Commented [RD41]: Re Uberoi: The added details they suggest are good ones if there is room for them. The seals are very important in our understanding of Harappan society.

Commented [RD42]: Re Uberoi: This date change is sound according to recent scholarship.

fell into decline. ~~Since most historical linguists now agree~~ Historical linguists have hypothesized that the Indo-European language family originated in the steppe region north of the Black and Caspian seas, ~~it is likely, and that~~ that speakers of ancestral Indic languages entered northern India from the west, probably across Iran. (Persian, or Farsi, is also an Indo-European language.) Scholars of the Vedic texts have also argued for an even earlier presence of Indo-European languages in the Indus region. From about 1900 BCE, a dispersion of people from the Indus-Saraswati region took place, likely owing to serious ecological changes, including depletion of forests and consequent soil erosion and flooding. Substantial numbers moved east to the Ganges plain and to other parts of South Asia. These migrants included speakers of Indic languages. In central and southern India, ~~as well as the island of Sri Lanka,~~ languages in the Dravidian family, unrelated to Indo-European, remained dominant. Modern languages in that family include Tamil and Telugu.

Later in the Vedic period, new royal and commercial towns arose along the Ganges, India's second great river system. By 600 BCE the social, religious, and philosophical ideas and practices central to early Hinduism had emerged and represented continuity with both the Harappan culture and the teachings and devotions describes in the Vedas. **Teachers focus students on the question:**
How did early Hindus understand and express the idea of a Supreme Being compared to the way Christians or Muslims might do that today? Brahmins, that is, the class of priestly families, performed complex devotional rituals, but many important sages, such as Valmiki and Vyasa, were not brahmins. The

Commented [RD43]: These suggested changes draw on the Uberoi recommendation regarding the Indo-European issue. Uberoi is right in arguing that current scholarship recognizes the void of evidence of just how Indo-European languages came to be spoken in India. Clearly there was no invasion or even any sort of movement that can definitively be called a "migration" of people into India. It's best to leave this issue indeterminate for now, and I don't see that California sixth graders need to learn about how 19th century British racists got it wrong. On the other hand, I cannot endorse the hypothesis that Sanskrit and the other Indo-European languages spoken in India are indigenous. That would have to mean that either the Indic languages are NOT Indo-European or that Proto-Indo-European originated in India, which none of the major authorities on Indo-European origins that I know of argue.

Commented [RD44]:

Commented [RD45]: Re Uberoi: Adding royal here is a sound change. I notice that you have accepted the use of Ganga rather than Ganges on the first page of the India section, but on this page and elsewhere you use Ganges. I wonder if teachers and students will identify Ganga with Ganges. You might write "Ganges (Ganga)" on first use, then stick with the more familiar Ganges.

Commented [RD46]: There's nothing a classroom can do with a huge multifaceted question like that. I suggest a different one further down

847 ~~brahmin-class~~ Sages, both brahmins and non-brahmins, expounded the idea of
848 Brahman as the divine principle of being. Hindu scriptures took their present form
849 at this time and include later Upanishads, the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and
850 Bhagavad Gita. Brahman, the Supreme God, is defined in scripture as immanent
851 (present throughout the world) and transcendent (beyond it as well). In action,
852 Brahman creates, preserves and dissolves the universe over vast periods of
853 time. Brahman also becomes the various deities with multiple names and forms
854 who are worshiped as distinct personal Gods or Goddesses, such as Vishnu,
855 Shiva, and Sarasvati. Key Hindu beliefs evident at this time include the identity of
856 the soul (atman) with Brahman, dharma (including ethics, law and justice),
857 karma, reincarnation, and liberation from rebirth. The supreme quest is to
858 achieve oneness with God. Many of the central practices of Hinduism today,
859 including home and temple worship, yoga, meditation, rites of passage
860 (samskaras), festivals, pilgrimage, respect for saints and gurus, and an
861 acceptance of religious diversity, developed over this period.

862 As in all early civilizations, Indian society witnessed the development of a
863 system of social classes. Ancient Indian society formed into self-governing
864 groups, *jatis*, that emphasized birth as the defining criteria. *Jatis* initially shared
865 the same occupation and married only within the group. This system, often
866 termed caste, provided social stability and gave an identity to each community.
867 The *Vedas* also describe four main social categories, known as varnas, namely:
868 Brahmins (priests); Kshatriyas (kings and warriors); Vaishyas (merchants,
869 artisans, and farmers) and Sudras (peasants and laborers). A person belonged

Commented [RD47]: Re Uberoi: This is a better, more nuanced statement of Hindu ideas of the Supreme Being.

870 to a particular varna by his professional excellence and his good conduct, not by
871 birth itself. In addition, by 500 CE or earlier, there existed certain communities
872 outside this system, the “Untouchables,” who did the most unclean work, such as
873 cremation, disposal of dead animals, and sanitation. Teachers should make clear
874 to students that *jati* was a social-economic and cultural structure rather than a
875 religious belief. Today many Hindus, in India and in the United States, do not
876 identify themselves as belonging to a caste. Women in India had a right to their
877 personal wealth, especially jewelry, gold, and silver, but fewer property rights
878 than men. They participated equally with their husbands in religious ceremonies
879 and festival celebrations. Hinduism is the only major religion in which God is
880 worshipped in female as well as male form.

881 One text Hindus rely on for solutions to moral dilemmas is the *Ramayana*, the
882 story of Rama, an incarnation or avatar of Vishnu, who goes through many
883 struggles and adventures as he is exiled from his father’s kingdom and has to
884 fight a demonic enemy, Ravana. Rama, his wife Sita, and some other characters
885 are challenged by critical moral decisions in this epic work. The teacher might
886 select the scene in which Rama accepts his exile, or the crisis over the broken
887 promise of Sugriva, the monkey king, and then ask students: **What is the moral**
888 **dilemma here? What is the character’s dharma?** In this way, students can
889 deepen their understanding of Hinduism as they are immersed in one of ancient
890 India’s most important literary and religious texts.

891 Students now turn to the question: **In what circumstances did Buddhism**
892 **emerge in India considering that Hindu beliefs and traditions were already**

Commented [RD48]: Re Uberoi: I think it is much better to get students to think about premodern India in terms of jati and varna and not caste at all. The paragraph above does the job. Certainly this of a “social hierarchy pyramid” is highly misleading.

widely practiced? Buddhism emerged in the sixth century BCE in the moral teachings of Siddhartha Gautama, the "Buddha". Through the story of his life, his Hindu background, and his search for enlightenment, students may learn about his fundamental ideas: suffering, compassion, and mindfulness. Buddhism waned in India in the late first millennium CE as the result of a resurgence of Hindu tradition. Buddhist monks, nuns, and merchants, however, carried their religion to Sri Lanka (Ceylon), Central Asia, China, and Southeast Asia, where many people continue to follow it today. In India, through the teachings of Mahavira, Jainism, a religion that encouraged the idea of *ahimsa*, or nonviolence, already a key concept in Hindu *dharma*, paralleled the rise of Buddhism. It has continued to play a role in modern India, notably in Mohandas Gandhi's ideas of nonviolent disobedience.

In the late fourth century BCE Chandragupta Maurya unified most of India through conquest and diplomacy and established the Maurya Empire. Teachers pose the question: **Why do you think the rulers of the Maurya empire found it in their interest to encourage commercial and diplomatic ties with kingdoms of the Middle East and Egypt?** Governing a powerful empire with a million-man army, the Maurya dynasty maintained strong diplomatic and trade connections to the Hellenistic states to the west. The Maurya Empire reached its peak under the rule of Chandragupta's grandson Ashoka (268-232). Generally, ancient rulers in India and elsewhere combined authoritarian rule and military campaigning with policies that promoted religious harmony and social peace. Ashoka is especially notable for efforts to order society by peaceful means.

Commented [RD49]: "How did they increase" gives students no guidance for considering cause, consequence, or other analytical goal. Need a more historically concrete question that prompts examination of evidence.

Beginning his reign with fierce military campaigns, he later had a strong change of heart, converted to Buddhism, and devoted the rest of his rule to promoting nonviolence, family harmony, and tolerance among his subjects. The Maurya Empire broke up into small states in the early second century BCE.

The Early Civilizations of China

- How did the environment influence the development of civilization in China?
- What factors helped China unify into a single state under the Han Dynasty? What social customs and government policies made the centralized state so powerful?
- How did the philosophical system of Confucianism support individuals, rulers, and societies?
- How did the establishment of the Silk Road increase trade, the spread of Buddhism, and the connections between China and other regions of Afroeurasia?

In this unit students study early Chinese civilization, that emerged first in the Huang He (Yellow) River valley with the Shang dynasty (ca.1750-1040 BCE) and later spread south to the Yangzi River area. Students begin their study with the question: **In what ways did the Huang He and Yangzi river systems contribute to the development of complex urban society in China?** The Huang He could be a capricious river, exposing populations to catastrophic floods. On the other hand, farmers supported dense populations and early cities

Commented [RD50]: See my suggested changes below.

by cultivating the valley's loess, that is, the light, fertile soil that yielded bountiful grain crops. Through lesson five of California EEI unit, "The Rivers and Ancient Empires of China and India," students learn about the importance of ecosystem goods and services to the early Chinese. Humans and human communities benefit from the dynamic nature of rivers and streams in ways that are essential to human life and to the functioning of our economies and cultures. Building on its agriculture and natural resources, the Shang society made key advances in bronze-working and written language. Some of the evidence about the Shang comes from "oracle bones," that is, records of divination inscribed on animal bones. The script on the oracle bones is the direct ancestor of modern Chinese characters, a logographic script that differs from the alphabetic systems that developed in other parts of the world.

The Zhou dynasty (1122-256 BCE), the longest lasting in China's history, grew much larger than the Shang by subjecting local princes and chiefs of outlying territories to imperial authority. By the eighth century BCE, however, many of these subordinate officers built up their own power bases and pulled away from the center, partly by perfecting iron technology to make armaments. The Zhou gradually weakened, plunging China into a long period of political instability and dislocation, especially during the Warring States Period, which lasted nearly two centuries.

In those times of trouble, the scholar Confucius (551-479 BCE) lived and wrote. His teachings were the basis of the philosophical system of Confucianism which had a major influence on the development of Chinese government and

society. Students focus on the question: **What specific values and practices did the Confucian philosophical tradition advance to encourage both harmony in families and just and effective government?** He tried to make sense of the disrupted world he saw, and he proposed ways for individuals and society to achieve order and goodness. By examining selections from the *Analects*, or “sayings” of Confucius, students learn that, as with Socrates and Jesus, his ideas were written down by others at a later time. In Confucian teachings, which were elaborated by other scholars in later centuries, good people practice moderation in conduct and emotion, keep their promises, honor traditional ways, respect elders, and improve themselves through education. Confucius emphasized ritual, filial piety and respect for social hierarchy, and promoted the dignity and authenticity of humanity. He encouraged the most educated, talented, and moral men to serve the state by becoming scholar-officials, which later made the government of China stronger. He also, however, instructed women to play subordinate roles to husbands, fathers, and brothers, though some educated Chinese women produced Confucian literary works.

| Grade Six Classroom Example: The Impact of Confucianism |
|---|
| In order to help her students understand the social impact of Confucianism, Ms. Aquino asks them to read “Selections from the Confucian Analects,” available on the Asia for Educators website from Columbia University in short excerpts with DBQ questions by topic. Specifically, she has students read and analyze Analects 1.2, 4.16, and 12.2, on filial piety and humaneness, excerpts |

from the *Classic of Filiality*, and Ban Zhao's *Admonitions for Women* (the first three paragraphs) written by a woman during the Han dynasty, all on the Asia for Educators website from Columbia University.

Ms. Aquino first introduces the sources and explains the purpose of the reading is to help answer the question: **How did the philosophical system of Confucianism support individuals, rulers, and societies?** Students undertake close readings of each document one at a time. They attempt the first reading alone.

In the second reading, Ms. Aquino provides sentence deconstruction charts to show students the cause-and-effect structure of the compound sentences of these texts. As her students are reading, Ms. Aquino clarifies that “humaneness” refers both to good individual behavior and social order. Ms. Aquino then asks student pairs to discuss: **What is the relationship between individual good behavior and social order (or the greater good of society)?** Each pair writes down their answer and cites one piece of evidence from the reading to support their answer. Ms. Aquino then has pairs of students share out their answers and evidence, and points out that to Confucius nothing was more important to social order than the good behavior of all individuals.

In the third reading, students mark up the text, underline the positive things that a person should do or be, circle the negative things that a person should not do or be, and draw a box around any words they don't understand. After students have gone through the first two texts, Ms. Aquino asks students to share out the

words that they have underlined while the teacher records those words on the board under the title “Men.” Then she explains that the final text, Ban Zhao’s *Admonitions*, was written by a woman for an audience of women, unlike the first two texts, which were written by men mostly for an audience of men. Students do the above close readings with the Ban Zhao text, and the teacher records the positive attributes they have underlined on the board under the title “Women.” Next student groups fill out a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the positive features for men and those for women. As a group, they decide which are the most important similarities and differences, and write a group claim to answer the question: How was the Confucian ideal behavior different for men and women?

To help English learners with academic vocabulary, Ms. Aquino gives them sentence starters as a model, such as “While under Confucianism men were supposed to _____ and women were supposed to _____, both had the responsibility to _____.” and “To maintain order in society, Confucians believed that both men and women should _____, but only men had the responsibility to _____, while women _____.” Finally, each group cites and analyzes three pieces of evidence (one from each source) on an evidence analysis chart.

CA HSS Standards: 6.6.3, 6.6.4

CA HSS Analysis Skills (6–8): Research, Evidence and Point of View 5

CA CCSS for ELA/Literacy: SL.6.1, L.6.5, L.6.6, RH.6-8.1, RH.6-8.2, WHST.6-8.1, WHST.6-8.7, WHST.6-8.9

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| CA ELD Standards: ELD.PI.6.1, 3, 6a, 6b, 10b, 11a; ELD.PII.6.1, 6 |
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978

979 Daoism was a second important philosophical tradition begun in this early
980 period. According to Chinese tradition, Laozi (Lao-tzu) was another sage who,
981 lived around the same time as Confucius and developed an alternative set of
982 teachings. Daoism emphasized simple living, shunning of ambition, harmony with
983 nature, and the possibility of a blissful afterlife. Teachers should note that the
984 Pinyin Romanization system (Laozi and Daoism) is now more widely used than
985 the Wade-Giles system (Lao-tzu and Taoism) used in the standards.

986 Next students turn to Chinese imperial government, with the questions: **Did**
987 **the methods that Shi Huangdi use to unify China make him a cruel tyrant or**
988 **a great political builder and organizer?** China's long era of division ended
989 when Shi Huangdi (221-210 BCE), a state-builder of great energy, unified China
990 from the Yellow River to the Yangzi River and created the Qin dynasty. In less
991 than a dozen years, he laid the foundations of China's powerful imperial
992 bureaucracy. He imposed peace and regularized laws. He also severely
993 punished anyone who defied him, including Confucian scholars, and he uprooted
994 tens of thousands of peasant men and women to build roads, dykes, palaces, the
995 first major phase of the Great Wall, and an enormous tomb for himself. Teachers
996 may introduce students to the excavations of this immense mausoleum, which
997 have yielded a veritable army of life-sized terra cotta soldiers and horses. Shi
998 Huangdi is also well known for employing scholars to standardize and simplify
999 the Chinese writing system, which provided the empire with a more uniform

1000 system of communication.

1001 Shi Huangdi's Qin Dynasty soon fell to the longer-lasting Han dynasty (206
1002 BCE–220 CE), which unified even more territory and placed central government
1003 in the hands of highly educated bureaucrats. Immersed in Confucian teachings,
1004 these scholar-officials promoted the idea that peace in society requires people to
1005 think and do the right thing as mapped out by tradition. Harmony in the family
1006 was seen by Confucians as the key to harmony in the world. Ethical principles
1007 should uplift the state. Rulers should govern righteously because when they do
1008 they enjoy the trust of their subjects. The benevolent ruler demonstrates that he
1009 possesses divine approval, or the "mandate of heaven," an idea that first
1010 emerged in Zhou dynasty times. But if the monarch is despotic, he risks losing
1011 that mandate, bringing misfortune on his people and justifiable rebellion.
1012 Promotion of Confucianism helped create a strong, stable government and social
1013 order in China. All educated men (from the emperor on down) were trained to
1014 serve the state and act morally for the good of the people, rather than to seek
1015 profit. The highest social rank (under the imperial family) was to be a scholar-
1016 official, rather than a warrior, priest, or merchant.

1017 In the first century CE, Han officials governed about 60 million people, the
1018 great majority of them productive farmers. Major technological advances of the
1019 era include new iron farm tools, the collar harness, the wheelbarrow, silk
1020 manufacturing, and the cast-iron plow, which cultivators used to open extensive
1021 new rice-growing lands in southern China. Han power declined in the second
1022 century CE, as regional warlords increasingly broke away from centralized

1023 authority, leading to some 400 years of Chinese disunity. However, the ideal that
1024 China should be unified was never lost, and later dynasties modeled themselves
1025 after the Han, as they united the whole territory under one centralized state,
1026 governed by Confucian principles using scholar-officials, and tried to keep the
1027 Mandate of Heaven.

1028 The Han Dynasty also established important connections with other societies
1029 , as students investigate with the question: **For what reasons did China and**

1030 **societies to the west want to establish overland contacts with one another**

1031 **across thousands of miles of steppes, mountains, and deserts?** The spread

1032 of the Han empire to the north and west, concern about nomadic raiders from the

1033 north led to seek contact with societies to the west. At the end of the second

1034 century BCE, the Han Chinese empire and the Parthian Persian empire

1035 exchanged ambassadors. Chinese ambassadors (and merchants) gave gifts of

1036 silk cloth to the Parthians, Kushans, and other Central Asian states. Quickly

1037 realizing the value of silk, merchants from Persia, the Kushan and Maurya

1038 empires, and other Central Asian states began to trade regularly with Chinese

1039 merchants. Caravans of luxury goods regularly traveled the overland trade route,

1040 “the Silk Road” (really a number of routes, trails and roads) that crossed the

1041 steppes north of the Himalayas. Maritime commerce along the chain of seas that

1042 ran from the East China Sea to the Red Sea also developed rapidly in that era.

1043 Students outline the land and sea trade routes on a map, preferably a map of

1044 Afroeurasia, so that they can see that connections now spread all the way across

1045 the middle of Afroeurasia, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. Ideas also spread

Commented [RD51]: The obvious answer to your first question would be, “The Silk Road increased trade because it was a road for transporting silk.” Regarding the third question, the answer would be that the Silk Road increased connections by providing a road (roads) between distant places. The questions need to probe causes and consequences. The answers should not be self-evident.

along the trade routes. In the climate of insecurity after the fall of the Han empire, missionaries began spreading Buddhism along the Silk Road to China. Students analyze the style of carvings of Buddhas and paintings from Dunhuang and Yungang which combine Indian, central Asian, and Chinese artistic influences.

The Development of Rome

- What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Roman Republic? Why did the Roman Republic fall?
- How did the Romans advance the concept of citizenship?
- How did the environment influence the expansion of Rome and its integrated trade networks?
- How did other societies (the Greeks, Hellenistic states, Han China, Parthian Persia) influence and affect the Romans?

The final unit on Rome presents a challenge to teachers because it is also taught in seventh grade. The sixth-grade teacher emphasizes the development of the Roman Republic and the transition to the Roman Empire, focusing on the themes of environment, political systems and citizenship, and increasing trade and connections between societies. The teacher also uses this unit to draw together major themes from the course by comparing Rome to earlier and contemporaneous societies and provide closure to the course. The teacher begins with the influences of the Greeks and Hellenistic culture on Rome, with this question: **What evidence do we have of the influence of Greek and Hellenistic cultural influence on Rome in its early centuries? By what**

Commented [RD52]: An immense question, much of it unanswerable except as a lengthy tome that encompassed several centuries of Roman history. Go for a question that permits students to engage in historical thinking.

1069 **means did Greek-speaking peoples and early Romans come into contact**
1070 **with one another?** Originally a small farming community on the central west
1071 coast of the Italian peninsula, Rome was on the edge of the prosperous eastern
1072 Mediterranean sphere dominated by Greeks, Egyptians, and peoples of the
1073 Levant. The Roman Republic grew in the Hellenistic environment and drew on
1074 the trade, technology, and culture of the Greeks. Through military action,
1075 diplomacy, and the practice of granting citizenship to conquered peoples, the
1076 Romans were able to unite the entire coastal area around the Mediterranean into
1077 a single empire and to extend that empire into Europe. Roman culture absorbed
1078 much of the Greek and Hellenistic traditions. Rome's own innovations included
1079 the arch, concrete, technologically sophisticated road building, and a body of
1080 laws that has had immense influence on legal systems in Europe, the United
1081 States, and other parts of the world.

1082 Students probe more deeply into Roman politics with this question: **How did**
1083 **the Romans practice the concept of citizenship in political and social life?**
1084 Citizenship, republican institutions, and the rule of law are major Roman
1085 contributions to civics. According to Roman tradition, Vergil's *Aeneid*, and the
1086 works of the historian Livy, Romulus, a descendant of the Trojan Aeneas,
1087 founded the city in 753 BCE. Kings first ruled Rome, but a republic replaced the
1088 monarchy in 509 BCE. The Romans adopted a distinct form of democracy, based
1089 on the Athenian model, with legislative power resting not with the entire mass of
1090 citizens, but with their representatives. Even though the political system
1091 experienced many problems as Rome grew in size, Roman culture provided very

1092 stable idea of citizenship. Whereas the ancient Greeks valued competition and
1093 individual achievement, the highest virtue to the Romans was duty to their
1094 families, to the state, and to the gods. They idealized the virtue of public service,
1095 as depicted in the story of Cincinnatus, who according to Roman sources was
1096 living on a farm when he was chosen to serve as dictator during a hostile
1097 invasion in 458 BCE. Cincinnatus gave up his power after the defeat of the
1098 enemy to return to his simple life on the farm. His selfless devotion to public
1099 service inspired later leaders such as George Washington. Just as Confucian
1100 teachings on the ideal of government service strengthened Chinese government
1101 and society, the Roman ideal of the duty of a citizen to the state gave
1102 considerable stability to the state and social order.

1103 The legend of Cincinnatus also emphasizes that the duty of a Roman to the
1104 state was often to fight. The Roman military was large, tough, and powerful.
1105 Environmental factors also influenced Rome's expansion, which students
1106 analyze with this focus question: **In what ways did early Rome's location on**
1107 **the northern side of the Mediterranean Sea serve that state's imperial**
1108 **expansion and the growth of its economy?** During the Early Republic (509-
1109 264 BCE), the Romans took over the entire Italian peninsula, whose fertile
1110 valleys and coastal plains produced bountiful harvests of wheat, wine, olive oil,
1111 and wool. Rome defeated its nearby neighbors in a series of wars and partially
1112 incorporated them into the young state, which ensured a steady supply of
1113 soldiers for the growing army. Expansion around the Mediterranean rim began in
1114 the third century BCE, when Rome defeated the maritime state of Carthage in

1115 the Punic Wars. By devastating Carthage, Rome gained thousands of square
1116 miles of wheat land in Sicily and North Africa, as well as a windfall of Spanish
1117 silver. In the decades before and after the turn of the millennium, Rome also
1118 conquered the Hellenistic kingdoms of Greece and Egypt.

1119 As Rome grew in size, the republican government that had worked for it as a
1120 small city-state became more and more overwhelmed. The teacher introduces
1121 the focus question: **What were the strengths and weaknesses of the Roman**

1122 **Republic? Why did the Roman Republic fall?** Rome's constitution distributed

1123 power among elected officials, the citizen body, and the oligarchic senate, but in
1124 practice decision-making lay with the senate, especially with its most influential
1125 members. One problem was that only certain elite citizens, called the patricians,
1126 had access to the senate and thus to political power. Other citizens, called the
1127 plebeians, challenged the elite patricians in violent conflicts. Plebeians finally
1128 won legal protections against patrician power and access to high political offices.

1129 However, as the Roman army conquered the entire Mediterranean basin,
1130 massive wealth from trade and spoils, as well as large numbers of slaves, poured
1131 into Italy. This increased the divide between wealthy (senators, patricians, and
1132 some plebeians) and poor (most plebeians, conquered foreigners, and slaves)
1133 and put great strain on the Roman political system.

1134 By the Late Republic (133-31 BCE), political competition between senators
1135 became intense and increasingly violent. A succession of ambitious generals
1136 used the loyal armies to challenge each other and, increasingly, the authority of
1137 the entire senate, which the statesman and author Cicero symbolized. This

Commented [RD53]: Here the question poses a problem of causation. That's good.

1138 discord culminated in the dictatorship of Julius Caesar and, under his successor
1139 Augustus (31 BCE-14 CE), in the establishment of what was in essence a
1140 monarchy and a new ruling dynasty. Augustus refused the title of king and
1141 pretended to defer to the senate, but his control over Rome was complete.
1142 Rulers afterwards took the title emperor. For much of the first two centuries CE,
1143 the Roman Empire enjoyed political and territorial stability, and the provinces
1144 benefited from new roads, a standardized currency, economic growth, and
1145 peaceful conditions.

1146 Returning to the question: **How did the Romans practice the concept of**
1147 **citizenship in political and social life?**, students evaluate the Roman Republic.
1148 The republic provided a model for future democratic institutions and the
1149 development of civic culture and citizenship, in the early U.S. and other modern
1150 nations. Students consider ways in which modern writers, artists, and political
1151 leaders have appropriated Greek and Roman ideals, values, and cultural forms
1152 as worthy models for civil society. Besides the borrowed words (senate and
1153 capitol, for example), architectural styles, and rhetorical models, later democratic
1154 states were inspired by the heroic civic models of Cincinnatus, the Horatius
1155 brothers, and Cicero, who defended the state and its republican institutions even
1156 when it was not in their self-interest. The struggle of Roman groups to widen
1157 political participation to the plebeians, to control the growing empire without
1158 allowing individuals to grow too wealthy or too powerful, and to harness the
1159 power of the military leaders to the service of the state, also offered sobering
1160 examples of how republicanism could be undermined by social conflict, individual

1161 self-interest, and military power. The teacher asks students why Romans allowed
1162 Julius and then Augustus Caesar to take over the republic. Both were successful
1163 military leaders who delivered peace after a long period of civil war. **Did the**
1164 **Romans give up freedom for order and peace?**

1165 However, even after Rome became an empire, the idea of citizenship
1166 remained strong. Wealthy Romans regularly contributed their personal funds to
1167 build civic structures, fund entertainments for the general public, and improve city
1168 life. The teacher has students analyze visuals from Pompeii of dedication
1169 plaques and inscriptions that are evidence of Roman civic contributions. **Why**
1170 **were wealthy Romans willing to pay for these public structures and**
1171 **events? What do you think citizenship mean to them compared to Romans**
1172 **who were not rich?** The teacher connects the Roman example to the
1173 responsibilities of students as citizens of the U.S. and to opportunities for service
1174 learning projects.

1175 Students make a social hierarchy pyramid of Roman society and recognize
1176 that by the Late Republic, Rome had a huge population of slaves. The teacher
1177 has them compare and contrast the social hierarchy of Rome and other earlier
1178 societies. Roman fathers had power over their families and dependents. Women
1179 who were not enslaved could achieve citizenship, though with several
1180 restrictions. They could neither attend the popular assemblies that had certain
1181 legislative powers nor serve as elected magistrates. They could, however, make
1182 wills, sue for divorce, circulate openly in public, and hold certain religious offices.
1183 Also, wives and mothers in wealthy families sometimes exerted great influence

Commented [RD54]: The question is being repeated here for the 3rd time.

1184 on public decisions. The teacher emphasizes that all the urban societies studied
1185 in the course, like most premodern societies, were patriarchies, with small
1186 wealthy and powerful elite groups and very large poor populations who worked at
1187 farming. Unlike Han China, however, much of the farming in Rome was done by
1188 slaves.

1189 Finally students investigate the question: **How did other societies (the**
1190 **Greeks, Hellenistic states, Han China, Parthian Persia) influence and affect**
1191 **the Romans?** Rome at its height was at the center of a web of trade routes by
1192 land and sea. Huge plantations worked by slave labor produced grain to feed the
1193 Roman cities. Uniting the diverse environments of Egypt, North Africa, Syria,
1194 Anatolia, Greece and Europe gave Romans access to vast resources. Roman
1195 roads united the empire, and trade routes by land and sea connected it with
1196 eastern Asia. Wealthy Romans dressed in silk imported from China and jewels
1197 imported from India. Students create maps of the trade routes across Afroeurasia
1198 that connected the Roman and Han empires with the Persians and Central
1199 Asians as middlemen. The teacher has student pairs examine a physical map of
1200 Afroeurasia and a map of the Roman Empire at its furthest extent. He or she
1201 asks the students to predict where the Romans would expand next. Student pairs
1202 write down a prediction and give geographical evidence to support it. This
1203 analysis shows that the Romans had actually conquered all the desirable land
1204 around them, with the exception of Persia. To the north was a cold land of forests
1205 and rural farmers and herders, to the south and southeast were deserts, to the
1206 west, the ocean.

Commented [RD55]: I'm bewildered as to why the lands that Rome could not have conquered even if they had wanted to "presented huge problems"? The Atlantic was a "huge problem" because the Romans couldn't get across it. I have no idea what is intended by this question, other than something having to do with Germanic and Hunnic invasion. But those invasions did not just result from "barbarians" becoming hostile. It has to do with major migratory movements extending into the Inner Eurasian steppes. Rome's inability to conquer Persia was unfortunate for them but hardly a "huge problem" problem for the survival of Rome.

1207 The Romans could not expand to the east because they could not defeat the
1208 Persian empire, first under the Parthians and then under the Sasanians. In the
1209 first century BCE, Roman attacked the Parthians from their base in Syria. This
1210 resulted in a catastrophic military defeat for Rome and confirmed the Parthian
1211 empire as Rome's chief rival for control over Mesopotamia. The Parthian and
1212 Sasanian Persian emperors promoted the religion of Zoroastrianism to
1213 strengthen the power of the state and the ruling class. Fighting continued
1214 between the two empires along the border in a bitter conflict. However, religious
1215 ideas and trade products spread back and forth between the two enemies. Many
1216 Romans began to follow Mithraism, a religion from Persia and the east.
1217 Christianity spread back and forth across the Roman-Persian border.

Commented [RD56]: Delete the last part of the sentence. Don't talk "nationalism" in the context of the ancient world. Students will be completely misled. Also most Persians were probably not Zoroastrians. That religion may have strengthened the solidarity of the elite class. That's all.

